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Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 7, LINE 1 OMITTED)

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 27 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHN SPARKMAN LATE FRIDAY RELEASED PORTIONS OF NEW EXECUTIVE BRANCH REPORT WHICH MAKES PUBLIC FOR FIRST TIME MAJOR PROVISIONS OF SALT PROPOSALS AND ASSESSES ABILITY OF U.S. TO VERIFY SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH TREATY TERMS. COMMITTEE HAD 0EQUESTED VERIFICATION REPORT FROM ACDA. HENRY BRADSHER OF WASHINGTON STAR SAID "CARTER ADMINISTRATION SAYS THAT IT DOES NOT THINK SOVIET UNION CAN CHEAT ON SALT TWO
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TREATY ENOUGH TO HURT U.S. INTERESTS WITHOUT GETTING CAUGHT." BRADSHER SAID ADMINISTRATION STATEMENT RECOGNIZED POSSIBILITY OF SOME CHEATING THAT MIGHT NOT BE DETECTED BY AMERICAN EFFORTS TO VERIFY ADHERENCE TO NEW TREATY, BUT IT SAID "ANY CHEATING ON SCALE LARGE ENOUGH TO ALTER STRATEGIC BALANCE WOULD BE DISCOVERED IN TIME TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE." RICHARD BURT OF NEW YORK

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TIMES SAID QUESTION OF WHETHER NEW AGREEMENT COULD BE ADEQUATELY POLICED HAS EMERGED AS "CENTRAL ISSUE" IN CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE OVER PROPOSED ACCORD, WITH SOME

MEMBERS EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER WHETHER U.S. COULD GUARD AGAINST SOVIET EFFORTS TO CHEAT. BURT SAID ADMINISTRATION ARGUES THAT IN MOST CASES MOSCOW WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO ENDANGER AN AGREEMENT BY TAKING STEPS THAT COULD LEAD U.S. TO ABROGATE AN AGREEMENT. ROBERT KAISER OF WASHINGTON POST SAID "DECISION TO DISCLOSE PUBLICLY NUMBER OF WEAPONS OF DIFFERENT KINDS THAT TWO SUPERPOWERS PROPOSE TO ALLOW EACH OTHER UNDER SALT AGREEMENT WAS MADE UNILATERALLY BY ADMINISTRATION, AT URGING OF SEVERAL SENATORS AND STAFFERS ON FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE." KAISER SAID ACDA STATEMENT THAT "THERE WILL BE AREAS OF UNCERTAINTY" REGARDING CHEATING IS LIKELY TO PROVOKE HEATED DISPUTE IN SENATE. "AN AIDE TO ONE SENATOR WHO IS SKEPTICAL OF PROPOSED NEW AGREEMENTS YESTERDAY CALLED ACDA STATEMENT 'WHOLLY INADEQUATE,' AND 'NOT SERIOUS PIECE OF WORK.' 'IF THIS IS QUALITY OF WORK WE CAN EXPECT FROM ADMINISTRATION ON SALT,' THIS AIDE SAID, 'WE'RE IN REAL DIFFICULTY.'" KAISER SAID IDEA THAT U.S. CAN AFFORD TO ACCEPT AN ARMS PACT WHICH SOVIETS CAN ADMITTEDLY EVADE, EVEN PARTIALLY, IS LIKELY TO BE CHALLENGED IN HEARINGS ON VERIFICATION THAT WILL BE HELD BY SENATOR JACKSON.
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2. GEOFFREY GODSELL, OVERSEAS NEWS EDITOR OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, SAID EXCHANGES BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW ARE SHARPENING AS CARTER ADMINISTRATION "EDGES CLOSER IN COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST SOVIET UNION AND CUBA FOR THEIR DEEPENING INTERVENTION IN HORN OF AFRICA." COUNTERMEASURES ARE STILL UNDER DEBATE, GODSELL SAID, BUT STATE DEPARTMENT IS "CLEARLY SIGNALING TO SOVIET LEADERSHIP MORE FIRMLY THAN EVER THAT DETENTE AS WHOLE WILL BE THREATENED IF MOSCOW PERSISTS IN POLICY ON WHICH IT HAS EMBARKED ON SIDE OF ETHIOPIA IN CONFLICT BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA. IMPLICATION IS THAT U.S. IS CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING 'LINKAGE' BETWEEN SOVIET POLICY IN HORN AND CURRENT U.S.-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS ON SALT AND WITH SOVIET DESIRE TO IMPROVE TRADE AND TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGES.... ONE FORM OF LEVERAGE ON MOSCOW WHICH WASHINGTON IS UNLIKELY TO APPLY IS ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT MILITARY INTERVENTION ON SIDE OF SOMALIS IN THEIR CONFLICT WITH SOVIET AND CUBAN-BACKED ETHIOPIANS."

3. HENRY TREWHITT OF BALTIMORE SUN SAID "TENSIONS IN SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS ARE GROWING SLOWLY TOWARD

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POINT AT WHICH THEY COULD PREVENT SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS NOW IN PROSPECT -- INCLUDING NEW ARMS CONTROL TREATY. SOME AMERICAN STRATEGISTS, NOT OTHERWISE COMMITTED AGAINST NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TREATY, ALREADY BELIEVE COMPLETION OF TREATY THIS YEAR IS IMPOSSIBLE. OR, IF TREATY

IS SETTLED BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS, ONE SAYS, IT MIGHT WELL BE REJECTED BY CONGRESS.... ADMINISTRATION SAYS FIRMLY IT WILL SEND TREATY TO CONGRESS ON ITS MERITS WHENEVER REMAINING ISSUES, SOME OF THEM HIGHLY IMPORTANT, HAVE BEEN RESOLVED. BUT ITS OWN ESTIMATES NOW PUT THAT TIME AT MIDYEAR -- AT EARLIEST. AND THERE IS GROWING DOUBT THAT CONGRESS, IF PRESENT CLIMATE PERSISTS, WOULD ACT FAVORABLY ON TREATY LATE IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION YEAR,
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IT IS AGREED TO ACT AT ALL. SOME ADMINISTRATION STRATEGISTS, AT LEAST, BELIEVE ADMINISTRATION WOULD MAKE MISTAKE TO SUBMIT ONE IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES."

4. HENRY BRADSHER OF WASHINGTON STAR REPORTED THAT IN REPLY TO BREZHNEV CHARGE THAT SOVIET-AMERICAN COOPERATION IS BEING OBSTRUCTED BY U.S. ATTITUDE ON ARMS CONTROL, STATE DEPARTMENT SAYS SOVIET ROLE IN ETHIOPIA IS RAISING LEVEL OF WORLD TENSION. IN MEETING LAST FRIDAY OF SUPREME SOVIET PRESIDIUM, BREZHNEV TALKED ABOUT SALT AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION. BRADSHER SAID STATE DEPARTMENT ISSUED STATEMENT SATURDAY "THAT TURNED OTHER CHEEK TO BREZHNEV'S CHARGES WHILE BRINGING UP PROBLEMS IN HORN OF AFRICA THAT BREZHNEV HAD NOT MENTIONED.... THEREFORE, RATHER THAN ACCEPT BREZHNEV'S ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS ON HIS TERMS, STATE DEPARTMENT DECIDED TO MEET HIS VIEWS OF OBSTACLES TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS OWN, SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT VIEW.... WHILE FORCEFULLY MAKING POINT THAT ETHIOPIAN DEVELOPMENTS AFFECT SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS, ADMINISTRATION WANTED TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO BREZHNEV'S COMMENTS ON DESIRABILITY OF COOPERATION."

5. NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED FEB. 25 THAT AMBASSADOR WARNKE HAD BRIEFED NATO AMBASSADORS ON STATE OF SALT NEGOTIATIONS.AND ON PRESENT AND FUTURE STRATEGIC TACTICAL NUCLEAR BALANCE.

6. MICHAEL KILIAN OF CHICAGO TRIBUNE SAID SENATE IS PREPARING TO DEAL CARTER "MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY DEFEAT" ON SALT TREATY AND "RIGHTLY SO." HE SAID IF PRESIDENT "GOES INTO SENATE WITH THAT TREATY, SENATORS WILL BOOT IT OUT OF STADIUM...IT WILL DISAPPEAR AS PERMANENTLY AS
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MOST OF CARTER'S CAMPAIGN PROMISES." KILIAN SAID CARTER CANNOT EXPECT CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO "DEFY THEIR CONSERVATIVE CONSTITUTENTS FOR SOMETHING THEY KNOW IS IRRESPONSIBLE." HE SAID "CARTER TEAM NEGOTIATES ON PRINCIPLE THAT NUCLEAR WAR IS UNTHINKABLE. SOVIETS DO SO IN BELIEF THAT -- AT SOME LEVEL OF MEGADEATH -- IT IS THINKABLE."

7. WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED REUTER DISPATCH FEB. 25 REPORTING THAT DEFENSE SECRETARY BROWN HAS ORDERED PREPARATION OF TENTATIVE PLANS TO BEGIN DEVELOPMENT IN 1980 OF MOBILE, MEDIUM-RANGE, NUCLEAR BALLISTIC MISSILE FOR USE IN EUROPE. NEW MISSILE, REUTER SAID, WOULD BE DIRECT COUNTER TO SOVIET SS-20, ALREADY DEPLOYED IN EASTERN EUROPE. NEW MISSILE WOULD COMPLEMENT PROPOSED NUCLEAR GROUND-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE. REUTER SAID "CRUISE MISSILLS HAVE BEEN AN ISSUE IN NUCLEAR ARMS TALKS WITH SOVIET UNION, AND 1,500 MILE RANGE LIMIT HAS BEEN PROPOSED FOR GLCM.... NEW MISSILE WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY SALT, AS IS CASE WITH RUSSIAN SS-20 MEDIUM RANGE MISSILE SINCE ONLY BALLISTIC MISSILES WITH AN NTERCON-TINENTAL RANGE GREATER THAN 3,300 MILES ARE COVERED BY SALT. HOWEVER, SOME OFFICIALS, SOURCES SAID, FEARED DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH AN AMERICAN MISSILE COULD FURTHER COMPLICATE SALT NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH HAVE RUN INTO DIF-FICULTIES IN PAST FEW MONTHS." PROPOSAL FOR MISSILE PRESENTLY IS SCHEDULED TO BE INCLUDED IN 1980 DEFENSE BUDGET WHICH WILL GO TO WHITE HOUSE NEXT MONTH FOR APPROVAL, REUTER SAID. VANCE

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